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SPECIAL GUIDE FOR FUNDRAISERS



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A GUIDE FOR FUNDRAISERS

Fundraising is one of the most delicate and important responsibilities in a campaign. Funds can be raised in a variety of ways - including personal solicitation, sale of items, mass collections, sale of tickets for raffles, dinners and other events, solicitation through advertising media, direct mail or leaflet drops, subscriptions to "membership organizations" and many other methods.

State law requires candidates, political committees and, in some cases, individuals to keep full and accurate records of financial transactions and to file periodic public reports of such information.

Since the job of fundraising is so closely governed by state law, there are a few simple rules you should keep in mind. This brochure is not a complete or fully detailed digest but an overview intended to help you understand your most basic responsibilities. For authoritative guidance, you should refer to the actual statutory language and to the formal Rules and Regulations and opinions issued by the State Board of Elections. In addition you are encouraged to seek assistance from the State Board of Elections, when necessary, by letter or telephone.

CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS

What is a Contribution under the Law?

A "Contribution" is -

- (1) a gift, subscription, donation, dues, loan, advance, or deposit of money or anything of value, knowingly received in connection with the nomination for election, or election of any person to public office, or in connection with any question of public policy;
- (2) the purchase of tickets for fund-raising events, including but not limited to dinners, luncheons, cocktail parties, and rallies made in connection with the nomination for election, or election of any person to public office, or in connection with any question of public policy;
- (3) a transfer of funds between political committees;
- (4) the service of an employee donated by an employer, in which case the contribution shall be listed in the name of the employer, except that any individual services provided voluntarily and without promise or expectation of compensation from any source shall not be deemed a contribution.

OBTAINING INFORMATION NECESSARY FOR REPORTING PURPOSES

State law requires candidates and committees to report:

1. in summary form, the totals of all contributions and other receipts;
2. by item, all transfers of funds to and from other political committees;
3. by item, all contributions and other sources of income over \$150.

In addition, candidates and committees must keep in-house records of all contributions over \$20.

To assist your campaign or committee treasurer in keeping accurate records, it is important (and easier) to secure the needed information at the time contributions are received. When soliciting or receiving funds, always obtain the full name, residence address and ZIP code of every contributor who gives more than \$20, and the date of the contribution for your own committee's records. For every contributor who gives a total of more than \$150 during the previous 12 months, state law requires that his name, residence, address including ZIP code, and the date of the contribution be included in the state report. Be sure to forward all money and information pertaining to the contribution to the treasurer of your political committee immediately upon receipt.

All funds of a political committee shall be segregated from, and may not be commingled with, any personal funds of officers, members, or associates of such committee.

TAX BENEFITS FOR POLITICAL CONTRIBUTORS

Subject to IRS rules and guidelines, individuals who give to candidates and committees are eligible to receive a limited tax credit or deduction for their contributions. A contributor may claim either a 50% tax credit on contributions up to \$50 (\$100 on a joint return), or a full deduction for contributions up to \$100 (\$200 on a joint return).

CAUTION!

Fundraisers are usually good salesmen. When "selling" your candidate remember it is illegal to promise any Government benefit, employment or appointment for a contribution. It is also illegal to coerce anyone into making contributions by physical force or threatened loss of employment or any other means.

This pamphlet is only for political committees and candidates who fall within the definition of a political committee as defined in Public Act 78-1183.

\$500 OR MORE

Any contribution of \$500 or more received within 30 days of an election must be reported by the committee treasurer within 2 business days of receipt to the State Board of Elections and/or the county clerk.

LITERATURE - Soliciting Funds

Any State political committee shall include on the face or front page of

all literature and advertisements soliciting funds the following notice:

“A copy of our report filed with the State Board of Elections is (or will be) available for purchase from the State Board of Elections, Springfield, Illinois.”

Any local political committee shall include on the face or front page of all literature and advertisements soliciting funds the following notice:

LITERATURE

“A copy of our report filed with the county clerk is (or will be) available for purchase from the county clerk (county clerk’s address), Illinois.”

Any political committee which solicits or receives contributions or makes expenditures on behalf of any candidate that is not authorized in writing by such candidate to do so shall include a notice on the face or front page of all literature and advertisements published and following all commercials broadcast, in connection with such candidate’s campaign by such committee or on its behalf stating that the committee is not authorized by such candidate and that such candidate is not responsible for the activities of such committee.

MASS COLLECTION

Mass Collections are permissible under the Act. However, if a person contributes more than \$20 to a mass contribution you must obtain the full name and address and total amount given by that individual.

FEDERAL FUND RAISING

If you are raising funds that are to be spent in any federal campaign, you should contact the federal election commission for a copy of their rules and regulations.

Federal Election Commission
1325 K Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20463
(800) 424-9531

PROHIBITIONS

No contribution and no expenditure shall be accepted or made by or on behalf of a political committee at a time when there is a vacancy in the office of chairman or treasurer thereof. No expenditure shall be made for or on behalf of a political committee without the authorization of its chairman or treasurer or their designated agents.

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No insurance companies or racing associations can make contributions to a political committee or candidates under Illinois law.

ANONYMOUS CONTRIBUTIONS

No person shall make an anonymous contribution or a contribution in the name of another person, and no person shall knowingly accept any anonymous contribution or contribution made by one person in the name of another person. Anonymous contributions shall escheat to the State of Illinois. Any political committee that receives such contribution shall forward it immediately to the State Treasurer.

THE STATE BOARD OF ELECTIONS

The State Board of Elections has the responsibility to administer the campaign financing act. The Board seeks good faith and voluntary compliance with the state campaign finance law. The State Board of Elections and the staff will try to provide any assistance necessary to help you to comply with the law.

GOALS

A primary goal of the State Board of Elections is to help bring about greater understanding of and participation in the electoral process. The Board hopes to obtain full voluntary compliance with the campaign financing act by those seeking election to public office and by political committees and other persons supporting those candidates. The Board will, however, vigorously exercise its enforcement authority wherever there appears to be an apparent violation of the law.

For more information, complete guidelines, and rules and regulations as set forth by the Board, write or call the

State Board of Elections
1020 South Spring Street
Springfield, Illinois, 62704
Area Code 217/782-4141

or

100 North LaSalle St.
Chicago, Illinois 60602
Area Code 312/793-4980

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STATE BOARD OF ELECTIONS